News Release

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

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Majority of Global Experts Now Fear Looming Geopolitical Disruption as World Leaders Head to Davos

23 January 2012

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- 54% of global experts expect a major geopolitical disruption over the next 12 months, up from 36% last quarter, while confidence in global cooperation has dropped
- 3rd quarterly Global Confidence Index polled 345 experts from business, government, international organizations and academia who are Members of the Forum's Network of Global Agenda Councils
- Access the full analysis and results online at http://www.weforum.org/ConfidenceIndex
- For more about the Annual Meeting 2012 in Davos-Klosters, visit http://www.weforum.org/annualmeeting

Davos-Klosters, Switzerland, 23 January 2012 – Fear among international experts of a major geopolitical disruption over the next 12 months has risen significantly to 54%, just as confidence in the state of global cooperation has dropped, according to the World Economic Forum's third Global Confidence Index.

The bleak outlook at the start of 2012, shared by a majority of 345 respondents from business, government, international organizations and academia, comes as world leaders head to Davos for the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting 2012, which runs from 25-29 January.

"A major geopolitical disruption early in the new year would certainly tip the global economy in the wrong direction given current confidence levels," said Lee Howell, Managing Director at the World Economic Forum responsible for the Annual Meeting and the Forum's Global Risks Report 2012. "The possibility of a geoeconomic disruption, such as sovereign default, is to some degree reflected in the market, but a major geopolitical disruption clearly is not," added Howell.

"Low confidence in governance and high concern about disruption are the making of a slow-burning fuse," said Michael Useem, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and Member of the Global Agenda Council on Catastrophic Risks. "The latest survey suggests that company leaders and public officials will urgently want to focus in Davos and beyond on job generation and spurring growth."

Respondents remain pessimistic about the global economic outlook, as the crisis of confidence reflected in the previous two quarters continues unabated. A consistent 60% of respondents said they lacked confidence in the state of global governance, signalling little trust in political leadership to deal with global risks.

Concern also persisted that a severe economic, environmental, societal and technological disruption could occur over the next 12 months.

Respondents from the private sector are marginally more confident about the prospects for 2012 than those from the public, civil society and academic sectors, although they are slightly more worried about the possibility of a social, geopolitical, environmental or technological disruption than their peers.

The fraying global system and lingering economic malaise will be the focus of the Forum's 42nd Annual Meeting. World leaders, including heads of government and ministerial representation from 19 G20 countries, are among the more than 2,600 participants who will convene under the theme The Great Transformation: Shaping New Models, which reflects the need for a profound overhaul of the current economic and governance systems.

The Global Confidence Index – a joint initiative of the World Economic Forum ' s Risk Response Network and Global Agenda Councils – is the only research initiative of its kind that targets such a large group of international experts who focus on monitoring key trends, identifying global risks and mapping their interlinkages. Respondents to the quarterly survey are Members of the World Economic Forum ' s Network of Global Agenda Councils, which includes policy-makers, business leaders and academics.

The next Global Confidence Index results will be available on 4 April 2012.

Notes to Editors

For more information about the **Risk Response Network**, visit http://www.weforum.org/RRN
For more information about the **Network of Global Agenda Councils**, visit http://www.weforum.org/GACs
For more information about the results, visit http://www.weforum.org/ConfidenceIndex
For more information about the Annual Meeting 2012, visit http://wef.ch/Davos
View the best pictures from the Annual Meeting on Flickr at http://wef.ch/pix
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